DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 054 881 RC 005 514

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TITLE Training and Relocation of Mexican Americans: Implications for Manpower Policy.

PUB DATE 27 Aug 71

NOTE 15p.; Paper presented at the Rural Sociological Society Meetings in Denver, Colorado, August 27, 1971

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29

DESCRIPTORS Attitudes; *Job Training; *Manpower Development; *Mexican Americans; Off the Job Training; On the Job Training; Questionnaires; *Relocation; *Research; Research Needs; Research Utilization; Security; Tables (Data); Training Allowances; Underemployed

IDENTIFIERS Texas

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The problem of moving workers from one community to another is not a new topic, but it is a little studied one. Much research has been done on the demographic characteristics of migrants, but there are very few studies of the sociopsychological characteristics of migration. In this study, the importance placed by the relocated individual on various kinds of opportunity structures is analyzed along with the changing perceived social status in the sending and receiving communities. The data from 140 relocatees are presented in a post-factum analysis but reveal that opportunity structures that avoid social impediments to raising status are more important to this group than those removing economic barriers. Furthermore, most of those who stayed on their new jobs and most of those who left felt that they were better off in the receiving community. The authors use these data to develop a model for policy use and further research. Related documents are ED 032 157 and ED 042 556. (Author/BO)

ED 054881

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TRAINING AND RELOCATION OF MEXICAN AMERICANS: IMPLICATIONS FOR MANPOWER POLICY

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RC 005514

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ABSTRACT

The problem of moving workers from one community to another is not a new topic, but it is a little studied one. Much research has been done on the demographic characteristics of migrants but there are very few studies of the socio-psychological characteristics of migration. In this study, the importance placed by the relocated individual on various kinds of opportunity stiuctures is analyzed along with the changing perceived social status in the sending and receiving communities. The data are persented in a post factum analysis but reveal that opportunity structures that avoid social impediments to raising one's status are more important to this group than those removing economic barriers. Furthermore, most of both those who stayed on their new job and those who left felt that they were better off in the receiving community. The authors use these data to develop a model for policy use and further research.

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Introduction

Rapidly developing technology has pushed many young and old people alike out of agriculture related occupations into cities where jobs are supposed to be more plentiful. Bishop (1967) suggests that one million people per year moved off farms in the 1950's. Furthermore, with the increased social change occurring within the American Society more shifting within the labor force will be necessary.

While a large volume of demographic research exists on migration patterns, little previous research has been conducted on the social and psychological dimensions of migration. The purpose of this paper is to explore two structural aspects of a planned labor relocation program and to determine how these structures might be altered to reduce termination. More specifically the relocatees perception about major facets of the program, differential perceptions about life in the sending and receiving communities based on a ten point scale, and the returnees reasons for leaving the program will be examined.

The LTV Project

In Texas much of the unemployment problem is concentrated near the Mexican Border. In 1966 the lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas[1] had an average unemployment rate greater than 6.0 percent while the rest of the state

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[1]This is the region from Brownsville to Rio Grande City containing Cameron, Willacy, Hidalgo, and Starr Counties of Texas. It also is one of the most impoverished areas of the entire United States.

was enjoying relative prosperity (the Dallas-Fort Worth area for example, had a 2.5 percent rate for the same period according to the U.S. Department of Labor, 1967).

Under incentives offered by the 1965 Manpower Act, Vought Aeronautics Division of Ling Temco Vought (LTV) established a modular training unit - a school temporarily established in a locality of very high unemployment in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas. A program was developed to train 750 men as aircraft assemblers in the Valley, then relocate them to the Dallas-Forth Worth area to work at LTV's plant in Grand Prairie. About 90 percent of this group were Mexican Americans.[2]

Actually three training centers were set up - at Harlingen, McAllen, and Rio Grande City. A class of fifteen men was started at one of the centers each week and lasted four weeks. Workers were instructed in sheet metal work including drilling holes, shooting rivets, and measuring sheet metal to be cut. In addition, the men were counseled about what to expect in their new community. They were shown slides of potential housing and other interesting facts about the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

During this four week period each trainee received a subsistance allowance to help provide for his family. At the end of the four weeks of formal training the worker and his family moved to the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Upon arrival in Grand Prairie each worker reported to the Texas Employment Commission to collect an allowance to offset the cost

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[2]The term Mexican American is used in this paper to designate those persons of Mexican or Spanish ancestry. Terms such as Chicano, Spanish American, Mexicans, Spanish Surnameds, etc. are used interchangeably to designate this group. For a complete bibliography of Studies of Mexican-Americans, see Saldana (1969).

of moving and be shown possible housing. TEC attempted to offer each worker a selection of potential housing but usually were able only to locate a couple of alternatives.

In addition to the four weeks of intensive training, each worker received eight weeks of on the job training, and with funds from the contract, LTV provided three counselors to aid the worker and his family with any crisis that might arise in the worker's new community.

Six hundred and eighty-four (684) workers were trained and relocated during the fifty-two weeks that the program was operating with 93 percent of the group remaining on the job at LTV for the first sixty days. Though 45 percent of those who relocated left LTV during the first two years of the program, plant officials were well satisfied with retention rates indicating that these classes had the least amount of turnover of any of the MDTA programs at the plant.

Methods and Procedures

A sample of 170 relocatees was selected from the 684 who participated in the program outlined above. This sample consisted of all those who were relocated during December, 1967; January and May, 1968. The sample was subdivided into five cohorts which were interviewed either at one, six, twelve, eighteen or twenty-four months after relocation. In addition, all returnees to the sending community who could be found were interviewed after leaving the program. Follow-up interviews with the one month cohort were also conducted but will not be used in this analysis. Because of difficulty in locating respondents especially after they leave the program, only 140 of the 170 were actually interviewed.

The scale used to assess the perceived difference in life between the sending and receiving communities is a modification of a scale developed by Kilpatrick and Contril (1960). The respondent is asked to rank his life before and after relocation on a ten point scale assuming one to be the worst possible life and ten to be the best possible life. The difference in the two scores is the value used in this analysis.

While statistical tests are not necessary in post factum analyses, a goodness of fit test will be used to evaluate the relationships between the different variables used in this analysis. The test used will be a Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test based on maximum difference in cumulative distributions. The K-S is a relatively powerful test and requires neither large samples nor cell sizes greater than five (Champion, 1970).

Analysis

Specified Type of Program.

Action programs are designed to meet specific needs of the population. The function of each such program can be met by a varying number of different structures. In the case of rural manpower programs the function is to increase the level of employment of rural people. A number of programs are available to meet this specific function. Some programs emphasize the finding of jobs that requires skills the worker already has. In this case, the structure to increase employment is a lateral transfer. Such programs rely heavily on providing the worker with information about existing jobs. Other programs emphasize training for jobs which have a high demand for labor. Still other programs emphasize monetary investment to relocate the worker to where jobs are available. All three of these types of programs serve the function of

reducing underemployment; however, all three types are not feasible on a large scale basis.

Two basic aspects can be derived from all the types mentioned above. Either the program emphasizes some form of knowledge dessimination or some form of economic investment. In the program being studied respondents were asked if they or their friends would participate in three types of programs: one where no training allowance was received, one where no training allowance was received but classes were in the evening, and one where no relocation allowance was received. Two of the situations emphasize economic aspects of the program while the other emphasizes educational aspects of the program. By comparing the distribution of responses to each question with a uniform distribution, we can determine to what extent the three items is given primacy by the relocatee.

Of the three distributions (see Table 1) the ones emphasizing education and relocation allowances varied significangly from a uniform distribution.[3] The magnitude of the maximum deviation from the uniform suggest that the educational aspects are of much greater importance than either of the allowances. Viewing the dsitributions of a program without the training allowance and a program without training allowance but training in the evening we see a dramatic shift from a negative or uncertain response to a positive one. Again this emphasizes the importance of the educational aspects of the program.

Having distinguished between the importance of various structural aspects of labor mobility programs, we logically turn to distinguishing characteristics among workers who stayed in the program and those who

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[3]For a comparison of single samples with a uniform distribution see Smith and Speed, (1970).

returned to the sending community. Both groups indicated that they were higher on a ten point self anchoring scale with over fifty percent of both groups giving a higher rank to the receiving community than the sending community (see Table 2). As would be expected, however, those who returned to the sending community perceived significantly less difference than those who stayed. A larger portion of the returnees indicated only one unit difference between life in the two communities.

Analyzing the returnees specific reason for leaving the receiving community we see that the largest portion of the group listed personal reasons for leaving the receiving community (see Table 3). We assume that this generally means that some family crisis occurred which called for the relocatees help in the sending community. Surprisingly a larger portion of the reasons given could have been solved without leaving the receiving community as the first four categories account for 40 percent of the returnee group.

Conclusion

The findings presented above indicate that the major complications in this program center around goals of the program and ways of attaining those goals (Merton, 1967). At the program level of analysis a possible conflict exists between the goal of the program as seen by the policy maker and that perceived by the worker (see Figure 1). While the policy maker's major concern is to reduce underemployment, the relocatees major concern is his own economic security. While providing basic skills and economic assistance may accomplish the former, security relies heavily on a more extensive dessimination of information. Thus, the underemployed worker seeks any information that will lead to his adjustment

into the cultural system. The real block to social mobility then appears to be a lack of knowledge about the cultural system rather than a lack of economic resources to invest for if one does not know the proper means for investing resources those resources are of no value to him.

The same lack of knowledge on the part of the underemployed worker about the cultural system is also evident in certain relocatees responses to crises that arise. As pointed out by Thomas and Znaniecki (1918-20), when an isolated group is brought into contact with a more complex world, the occurrence of crises that the groups set of norms will not handle increases greatly. The fact that forty percent of those who returned to the sending community gave reasons for leaving that revolve about problems faced by all relocated workers suggests that they were not knowledgeable of the alternatives. Thus, the returnee seems to react out of fear while the successful relocatee reacts out of knowledge of the situation. In fact, the successful relocatee may submit himself to certain displeasurable situations in the knowledge that he will attain his end goal that way.

Developing programs that not only teach basic skills but that also teach ways of responding to crises and anticipating and thus avoiding future crises is much more complicated. We need more extensive research to both successful and unsuccessful responses to sudden changes in the work systems as well as composite information about the social structures of both receiving and sending communities. We know little about the distinction between submission or response out of fear and submission or response out of knowledge.

With an understanding of both individual and social goals with regard to a specific situation, programs can be developed to meet both

sets of goals. The participants preparedness to shift from one cultural subsystem to another can be tested through verbal responses to hypothetical crises. Thus we can in fact structure labor mobility programs where disorganization will not occur.

Table 1. Analysis of Relocatees Responses to a Question Concerning Whether They or Their Friends Would Enter a Program under Differing Conditions

RESPONSE	Would You or Your Friends Enter a Program Similar to This One if You Were to Receive: NO TRAINING ALLOWANCE (136)	TRAINING IN THE EVENING WITHOUT ANY ALLOWANCE (138)	NO MOVING ALLOWANCE (138)	UNIFORM DISTRIBUTION
	----PERCENT----			
Would Not Enter Program	44.1	15.9	47.1	33.3
Uncertain	18.4	21.1	17.4	33.3
Would Enter Program	37.5	63.0	35.5	33.3
D	.108	.297*	.138*	

* $p < .05$

Table 2. Cumulative Percent Distribution of Stayer and Returnee Groups by Difference in Perceived Status between Sending and Receiving Communities

Difference in Perceived Status in the Sending and Receiving Communities based on a 10 point modified Kilpatric Scale	Stayers (N=77)	Returnees (N=44)
	Cumulative Percent	
-6	1.3	0
-5	1.3	0
-4	1.3	0
-3	1.3	4.6
-2	3.9	11.4
-1	9.1	13.7
0	28.6	47.8
1	41.6	70.5
2	58.5	86.4
3	72.8	88.7
4	87.1	88.7
5	89.7	91.0
6	97.5	95.5
7	97.5	95.5
8	98.8	97.8
9	100.0	100.0

D = .289

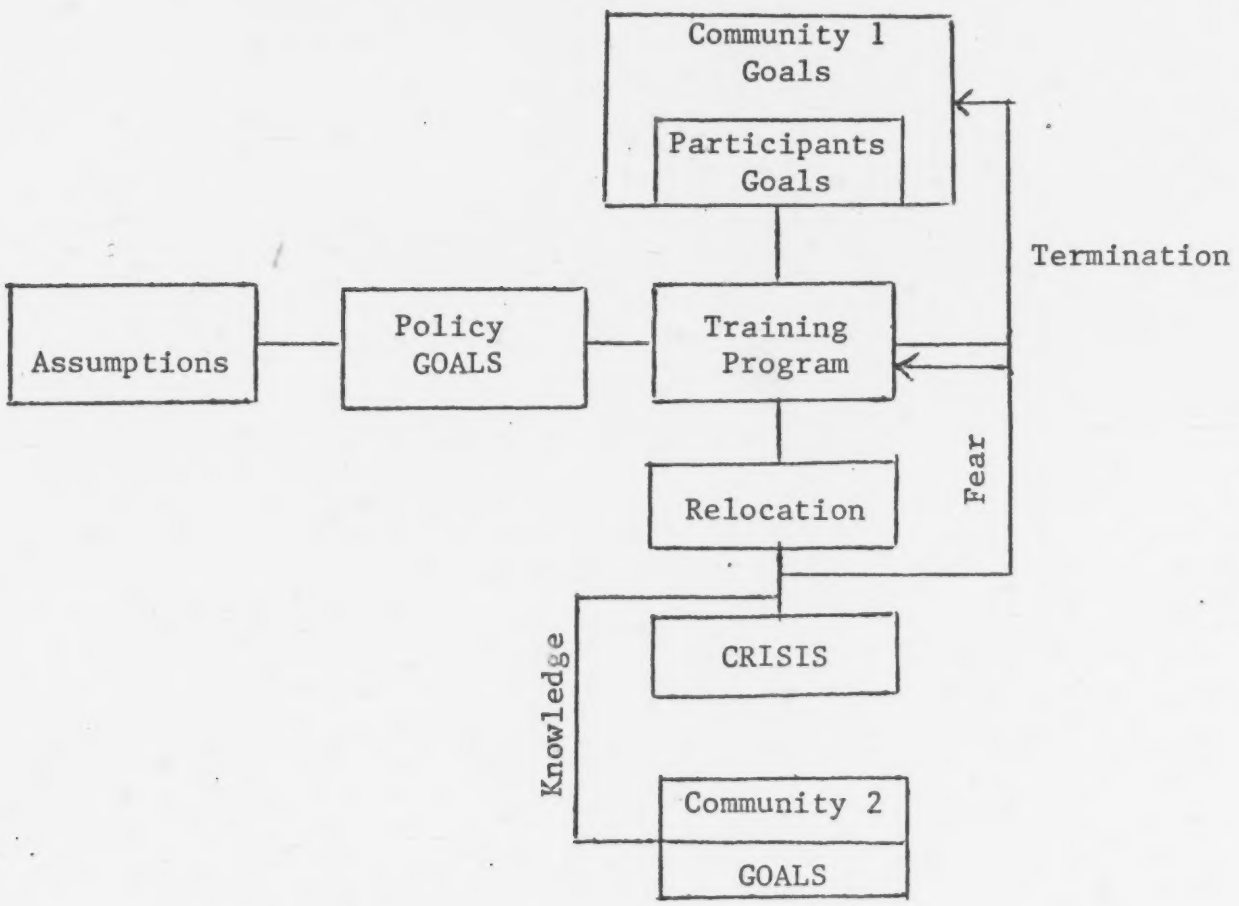
$p < .05$

Table 3. Percent Distribution of Returnees by Reasons for leaving the training program

Reason	Returnees N=44
	Percent
Not enough money or Overtime	11.4
Rent Too High	11.4
Poor Housing or neighborhood	13.6
Drive to work too far	4.5
Problems with job	18.2
Did not like area	9.1
Personal Problems	31.8

Figure 1

Structure of successful and unsuccessful
labor mobility between communities



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